(d) if so, the broad features thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM) : (a) to (d) The Government of India has launched the National AIDS Control Project-II in December, 1999 which aims to implement a comprehensive programme for the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in the country. The main strategies of the programme are :—

(i) Targeted Interventions to provide services and behaviour change communication to the most vulnerable and marginalised populations;

(ii) Extensive awareness programmes for the general population and strengthening the blood safety measures;

(iii) Low cost care for those already infected;

(iv) Inter-sectoral collaboration to generate a multi sectoral response through various Ministeries and civil society; and

(v) Strengthening institutions in India and make them capable of responding adequately to the epidemic.

An important strategy is also to involve NGOs, especially in the Targeted Interventions, School AIDS Education, Counselling and Low Cost Community Care.

Creating awareness is one of the most important thrust areas of the National AIDS Control Project-II. The focus of the strategy is on inter-personal communication and reaching out to the rural poor and the population in the urban slums. Various programmes are being broadcast/telecast on All India Radio and Doordarshan. Posters, pamphlets and other IEC material is developed in local languages. The field publicity units of the Directorate of Field Publicity and the Song & Drama Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting are also being utilised to create awareness among people.

Assistance to State Governments under National Family Welfare Programme

4322. SHRI LAJPAT RAI : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of India, are releasing the amount in instalments to State Governments in respect of Centrally Sponsored Schemes

under National Family Welfare Programme and this amount generally reaches late to State Governments; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM) : (a) and (b) Funds to the State Governments are normally released in four quarterly advance instalments and as such there is no question of late receipt of funds by the States.

Facilities for Mentally Retarded Persons

†4323. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) The number of hospitals for mental diseases in India, together with the number of patients to whom beds can be provided; and

(b) whether this is sufficient; if not, to what extent Government are serious for treatment of these mentally retarded persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM) : (a) and (b) There are 45 hospitals for mental diseases in India having over 20,000 beds. All persons suffering from mental diseases do not require admission or treatment in Mental Hospital. Most of the patients suffering from minor psychiatric problems like neurosis, adjustment reactions and psychosomatic disorders can be easily treated and managed by Physicians, Neurologists and other disciplines of medicines. To provide better provision of mental health services by developing community based mental health services integrated with existing primary health care services, a District Mental Health Programme has been launched by the Government under the National Mental Health Programme in 1996-97 and it is being implemented presently in 22 districts spread over 20 States in the country. Hence, the number of beds presently available is sufficient for the treatment of patients suffering from mental diseases. Patients suffering from mental disease are different from mentally retarded persons and for their management, vocational training centres are being run by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.